

(Romans 5:1-10, NIV84)

Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us. You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, though for a good man someone might possibly dare to die. But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him! For if, when we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life!

July 16

Afraid of God's Justice?

There is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.
I Timothy 2:5

During the First World War, a French officer fell wounded in front of the French trenches. The enemy's shrapnel was bursting all around him where he lay, entirely unprotected. Seeing his danger, a private crawled out of the trench, dressed the officer's wounds as best he could, and lying down beside him, whispered in his ear: "Don't worry, I'm between you and the shells. They must touch me first."

What a beautiful picture of him who, on Calvary's cross, placed himself between us and the thunderbolts of God's justice, and then assured us: "Do not fear! I am between you and the strokes of God's wrath. They must touch me first."

Jesus is the eternal Go-Between. He is the mediator between God and men. By his sinless life and by his holy, innocent suffering and death in the sinner's stead, he has taken his place between me and the stern demands of God's consuming justice.

And now I need not fear. As the prophet Isaiah foretold: He was wounded for my transgressions, He was bruised for my iniquities, the chastisement that brought about my peace was upon Him, and by His stripes I am healed.

To each of us the Christ says: "Do not fear! I have stood between you and

the avenging wrath of a just and holy God. I have absorbed the pain and anguish of your punishment when I died for you on Calvary's cross. You need do nothing--but put your hand in mine." What a wonderful Redeemer!

With such a Savior, there is nothing in life or death that can harm us. With the Christian poet we can say:

Thy wounds, not mine, O Christ, Have cleansed my guilty soul;
Thy stripes, not mine, O Christ, Have made my spirit whole.
Thy death, not mine, O Lord, Has paid the ransom due;
Ten thousand deaths like mine Would have been all too few.

(Devotion from: Daily Walk With God - Meditations for Every Day, by Herman W. Gockel)